

# Subsistence User's Guide

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

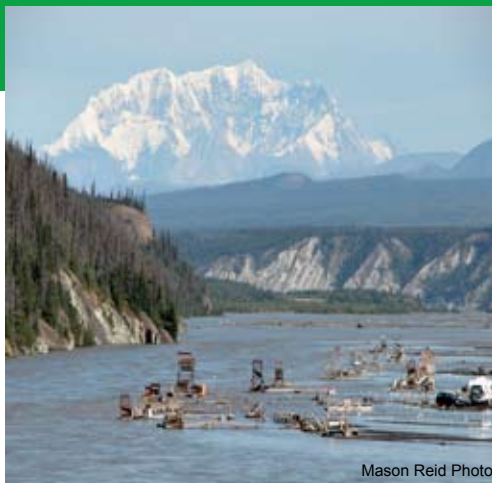
### SUBSISTENCE IN WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE

The United States Congress established Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve along with other conservation units in Alaska in 1980 when it passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, commonly known as ANILCA. In setting aside approximately 100 million acres of land and resources throughout Alaska for enduring protection, ANILCA recognized the economic and cultural importance of the harvest of fish, wildlife, and other wild resources to both Native and non-Native rural residents. Specifically, it provided the opportunity for those engaged in a traditional subsistence way of life on these federal lands to continue to do so. Subsistence harvest of fish and wildlife is allowed on federal public lands and waters in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve by qualified subsistence users subject to federal subsistence management regulations.

This guide has been developed to provide important information about the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Subsistence Program. It describes eligibility for hunting, trapping, and fishing; ways to access the park for subsistence activities; regulations about the harvest of firewood, plants, and berries; and ways to participate in the regulatory process.

For information about federal subsistence hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities on other federal public lands and waters in Alaska, you should consult other agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service about the subsistence programs on the lands that they manage.

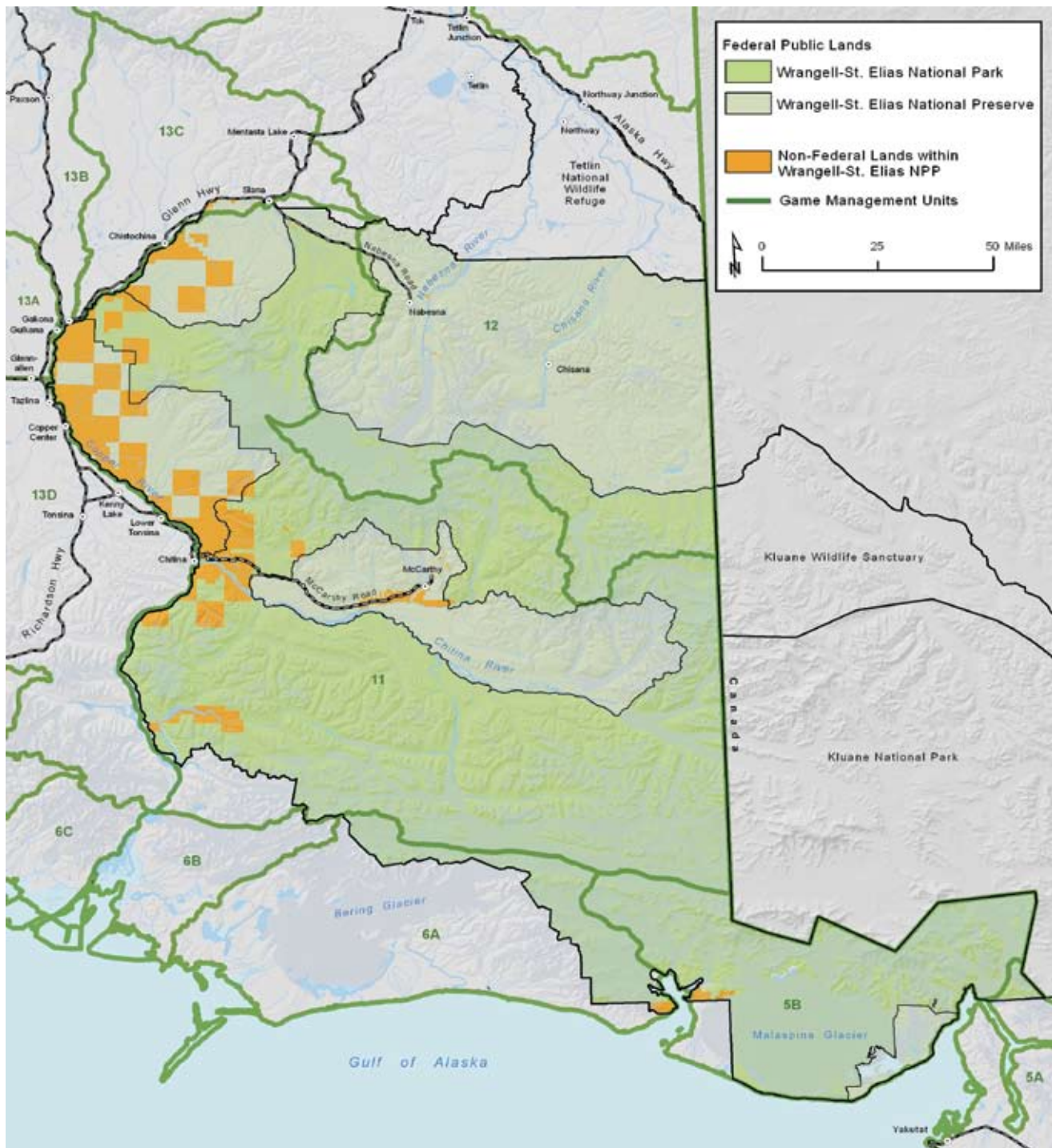
Some lands within Wrangell-St. Elias are designated as National Park, while others are designated as National Preserve. The eligibility requirements for hunting in the National Park are different from those for the National Preserve. These differences are described on page 3. The map on page 2 shows the location of Park and Preserve lands along with the location of non-federal lands within Wrangell-St. Elias.



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# Map of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve



## About the Map:

- Non-federal lands include Native Corporation conveyed lands, small isolated private tracts, University of Alaska lands, and State of Alaska lands (e.g., Department of Natural Resources lands).
- Federal subsistence regulations do not apply on non-federal lands.
- Note that land status may change and that these maps may not provide sufficient detail for you to locate non-federal lands or access easements on the ground. Contact the Park for further information about land status.
- The maps in this brochure only show land status within the boundaries of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. For information about the location of other federal public lands in the area that are open to subsistence contact the appropriate federal land management agencies -- the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service.

# Subsistence Eligibility in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

To hunt, trap, or fish in the Park and Preserve under federal regulations you must:

- 1) Be a rural Alaska resident and meet the eligibility requirements for the area where you intend to hunt, trap, or fish (see below for details).
  - \* *Eligibility is based on the location of your primary permanent residence. A seasonal residence does not qualify you as a rural resident.*
  - \* *To be considered an Alaska resident, you must have lived in the state for 12 consecutive months with the intent to remain indefinitely.*
  - \* *Non-rural areas are listed in the federal subsistence regulations booklets.*
- 2) Live in an area or community with a positive customary and traditional use determination for the species and area you wish to hunt, trap, or fish (see top of page 4 for more information).
- 3) Possess a State of Alaska resident license for hunting and trapping. Alaska residents 60 years of age or older can get a permanent identification card issued by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This card replaces the sport fishing, hunting, and trapping licenses. Youths 15 years of age or younger are not required to have a hunting or trapping license. No license is required for subsistence fishing.
- 4) Comply with season and harvest limit regulations.
- 5) Comply with all required state and federal permits, harvest tickets or tag requirements.

## Who Is Eligible to Hunt, Trap, or Fish in the National Preserve?

Both sport and subsistence harvest of fish and wildlife is permitted in the National Preserve. Local rural residents are eligible to hunt, trap, and fish for subsistence purposes in the Preserve under federal subsistence regulations. Federally qualified subsistence users must be rural residents and live in a community or area with a customary and traditional use determination for the area in which they wish to hunt, trap, or fish. Customary and traditional use determinations are listed in the federal subsistence management regulations booklets by area and species. See page 5 for additional information about sport harvest opportunities under state regulations.

Note that you may not add harvest limits from state and federal harvests to increase your total harvest limit unless the regulations specifically allow for this.

## Who Is Eligible to Hunt, Trap, or Fish in the National Park?

To be eligible to hunt or trap on lands designated as National Park you must make your primary permanent home in a resident zone community, live within the boundaries of the National Park, or have a subsistence eligibility permit (13.44 permit). The same eligibility requirements apply if you wish to fish in the National Park under federal subsistence regulations. Sport fishing under state regulations is also allowed. Sport hunting under state regulations is not permitted in the National Park.

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park has 23 resident zone communities: Chisana, Chistochina, Chitina, Copper Center, Dot Lake, Gakona, Gakona Junction, Glennallen, Gulkana, Healy Lake, Kenny Lake, Lower Tonsina, McCarthy, Mentasta Lake, Nabesna, Northway, Slana, Tanacross, Tazlina, Tetlin, Tok, Tonsina and Yakutat. Maps of the resident zone community boundaries for Dot Lake, Healy Lake, Northway, Tanacross, and Tetlin are on file at park headquarters. The other resident zone communities do not have established boundaries.

To be eligible for a 13.44 subsistence eligibility permit, you must be a rural Alaska resident and demonstrate that you have (or belong to a family that has) customarily and traditionally engaged in subsistence within the National Park without the use of an aircraft for access. The permit is valid for all permanent residents of your household providing you continue to live in a rural community. Contact park headquarters to apply.

If you have a 13.44 subsistence eligibility permit, live in the Park, or live in a resident zone community, you must also live in a community or area that has a customary and traditional use determination for the area and species you want to hunt, trap, or fish.



# Important Information to Know Before You Go

## WHAT ARE CUSTOMARY AND TRADITIONAL USE DETERMINATIONS?

Customary and traditional (C&T) use determinations define which communities or areas have customarily and traditionally taken a wildlife population or fish stock. To harvest fish or wildlife in a particular area, an individual must live in an area or community that has a “positive C&T” use determination. These determinations are listed in the federal subsistence management regulations booklets by game management unit and fishery management area. Customary and traditional use determinations are made by the Federal Subsistence Board for each species on a community or area basis.

## SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE LANDS

Some activities permitted elsewhere on federal lands in Alaska may not be allowed on lands managed by the National Park Service (NPS). For example, use of a firearm to take a free-ranging furbearer (that is, one that is not caught in a trap) under a trapping license is prohibited on NPS lands, and aircraft may not be used for subsistence access to National Park lands. Contact park headquarters for more information.

## OBTAINING HUNTING PERMITS, HARVEST TICKETS AND TAGS

Subsistence hunters are required to possess and comply with the provisions of any harvest tickets, permits or tags required by the state, unless superseded by federal regulations. For example, state brown bear tags are required in many units, and state sealing requirements for furbearers, such as wolves and wolverines, may apply.

When federal registration permits are required, subsistence users are not required to have state permits or harvest tickets. Consult the federal subsistence regulation booklet to determine whether a federal registration permit is required. These permits may be obtained in person during hunting season at the Visitor Center in Copper Center, the Slana Ranger Station, and from the Kennecott District Ranger. Hunters older



ATVs on an established trail off the Nabesna Road. NPS Photo.

than 15 years of age should bring their valid State of Alaska resident hunting license or permanent ID card (for those 60 years of age or older) along with photo ID when applying for federal registration hunting permits. If a federal permit is not required, check to see whether a state harvest ticket or permit is required.

If you have both a state harvest ticket and a federal registration permit when hunting in the Preserve and you harvest an animal, submit only one hunt report in accordance with the appropriate state or federal season and harvest limit. Please do not double report!

## DESIGNATING ANOTHER TO HUNT OR FISH FOR YOU

If you are a federally qualified subsistence user, you may designate another federally qualified subsistence user to take fish, moose and caribou on your behalf. Any species of fish allowed for subsistence uses in an area may be taken under a designated harvest permit. You can only designate one person to hunt or fish for you at one time, and you cannot hunt or fish at the same time as your designated hunter or fisher. Your designated hunter or fisher must get a designated harvest permit before hunting or fishing, must have the valid permit when hunting, fishing or transporting the wildlife or fish, and must return a completed harvest report for any fish or wildlife taken. A designated hunter or fisher may hunt or fish for any number of subsistence users, but may not have more than two harvest limits in his or her possession at any one time or fish with more than one legal limit of gear.

# Important Information to Know Before You Go

## SUBSISTENCE FISHING

In order to fish in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve under federal subsistence regulations, you must be a rural Alaska resident and have a positive C&T finding for the area you wish to fish. To fish in the Park under federal regulations, you must also live in a resident zone community, live in the Park, or have a 13.44 permit. (See section on the right for a discussion of sport fishing in the Park and Preserve under state regulations.) A State of Alaska fishing license is not required for federal subsistence fishing, but a federal subsistence fishing permit is required to fish within the Park and Preserve under federal regulations. Permits can be applied for in person at the Visitor Center in Copper Center or the Slana Ranger Station.

Federal subsistence fishing regulations also apply to the entire Copper River. The Superintendent of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is the local area fisheries manager for the Copper River. This authority is delegated by the Federal Subsistence Board. Federal permits are available at Visitor Center in Copper Center or at the Slana Ranger Station to federally qualified subsistence users. State of Alaska subsistence fishing is also permitted in the Upper Copper River District downstream of Indian River. Contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for permits, any license requirements, and other information about the state subsistence and personal use fisheries in the Upper Copper River District.

The primary fish species harvested by subsistence users in the Park and Preserve and in the Upper Copper River are salmon, burbot, lake trout, and Arctic grayling. Allowed methods for subsistence harvest of fish may vary between streams and regulatory areas. Methods may include fishwheels, dip nets, other types of nets (freshwater fish only), spears, and rod and reel. See the federal subsistence management regulations booklet for information specific to the area you intend to fish. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve lies within three fishery management areas: Yakutat, Prince William Sound, and Yukon-Northern.

## SPORT HUNTING, TRAPPING, AND FISHING

Nonrural residents of Alaska and non-Alaska residents may fish in both the National Park and the National Preserve under state regulations. Nonrural residents of Alaska and non-Alaska residents may also hunt and trap in the National Preserve under state regulations (but not in the National Park). A State of Alaska hunting, trapping or fishing license is required. State sport seasons and harvest limits may differ from those for federal hunts and fisheries. Sport fishing within the Park and Preserve boundary is only allowed using a closely attended hook or line. Chumming (placing fish eggs or parts, food, or other substances in the water to attract fish) is prohibited. Contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for state regulations booklets and more information about sport harvest opportunities under state regulations.

Use of off-road vehicles (ORVs), including all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), by sport hunters, trappers, and fishers requires a park-issued permit and is allowed only on established trails. Trail maps and ORV/ATV permits are available at the Slana Ranger Station and the Visitor Center in Copper Center.

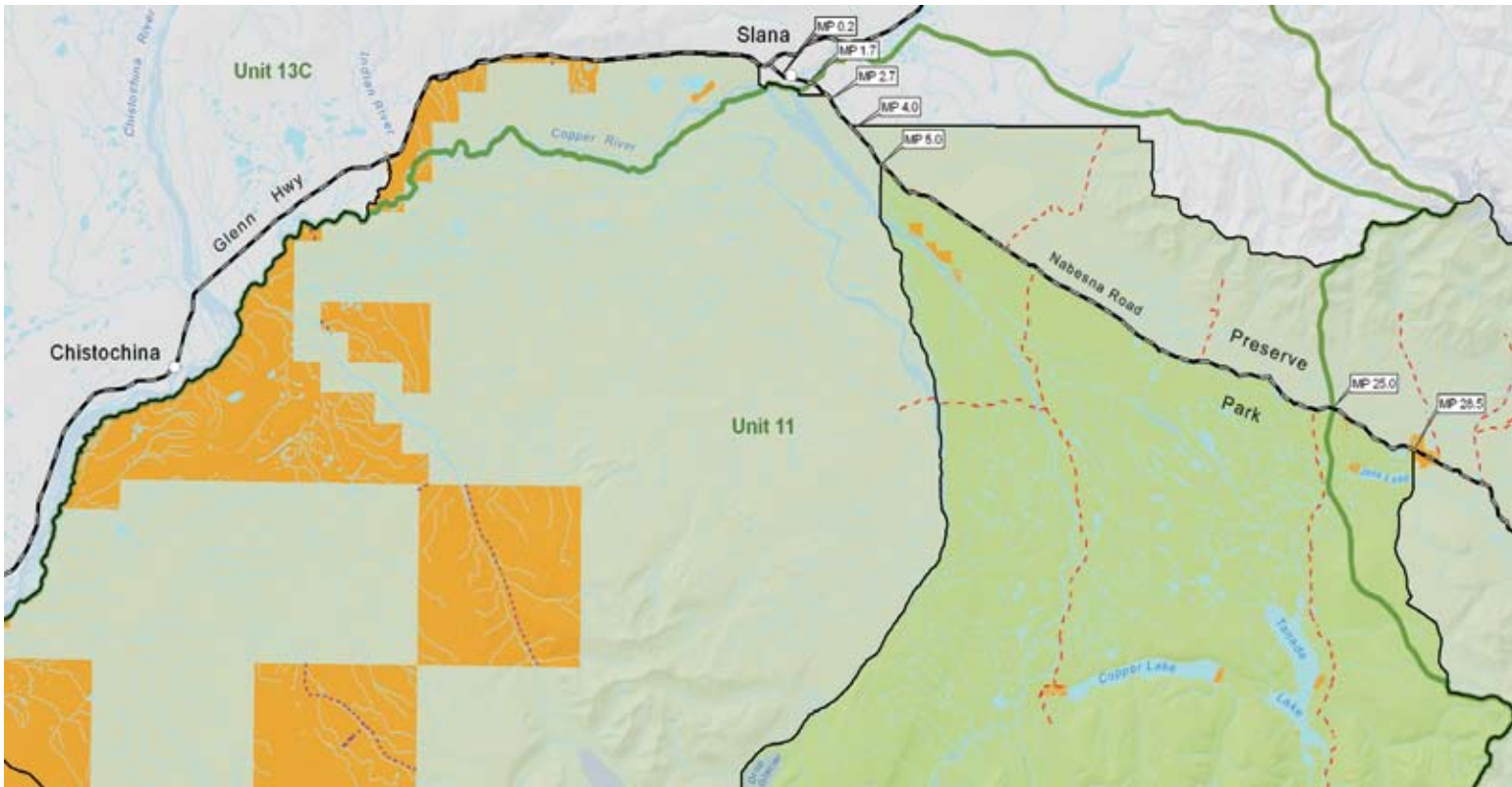


Copper River fishwheel. NPS Photo.



# Navigating the Nabesna and McCarthy Roads

## Nabesna Road



### McCarthy Road Mileposts

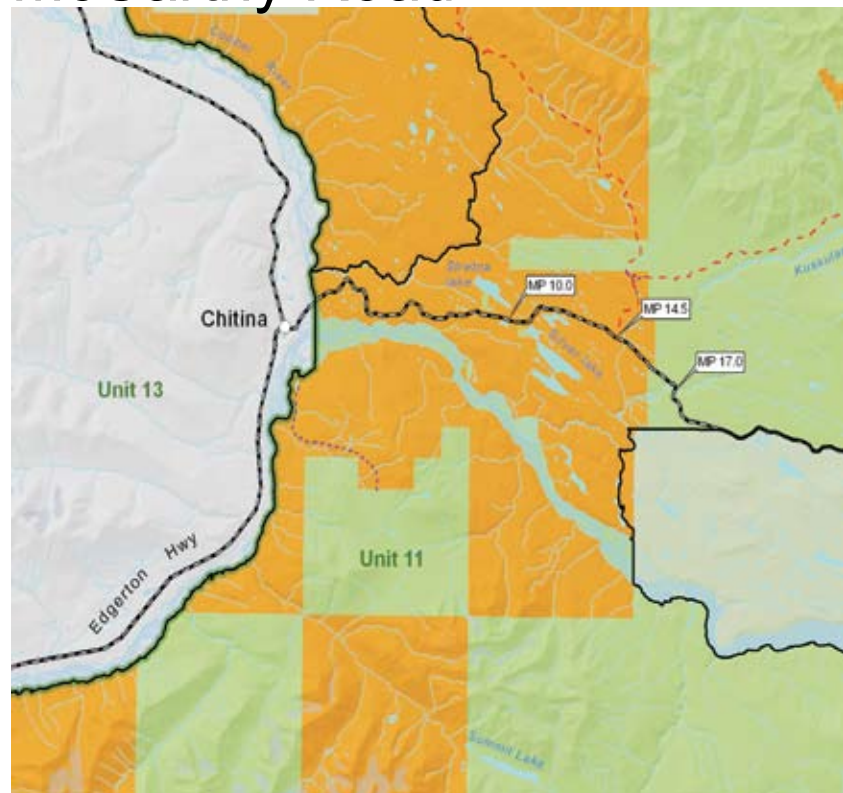
- Mile 10.0** Hiking trail to Strelna Lake. Private property adjoins the trail.
- Mile 14.5** Access road on the north to backcountry trails. Please respect private property by staying on the trail.
- Mile 17.0** Road crosses the Kuskulana Bridge.
- Mile 22.5** Boundary between Park and Preserve.
- Mile 29.0** Road crosses Gilahina River.
- Mile 44.0** Road crosses Lakina River.
- Mile 60.0** Road ends at the Kennicott River.

### Notes:

Much of the land adjacent to the McCarthy Road is private property. Please respect the rights of private property owners.

Mileposts are based on existing road markers.

## McCarthy Road



# Legend

## Federal Public Lands



National Park



National Preserve



Non-Federal Lands



Game Management Units

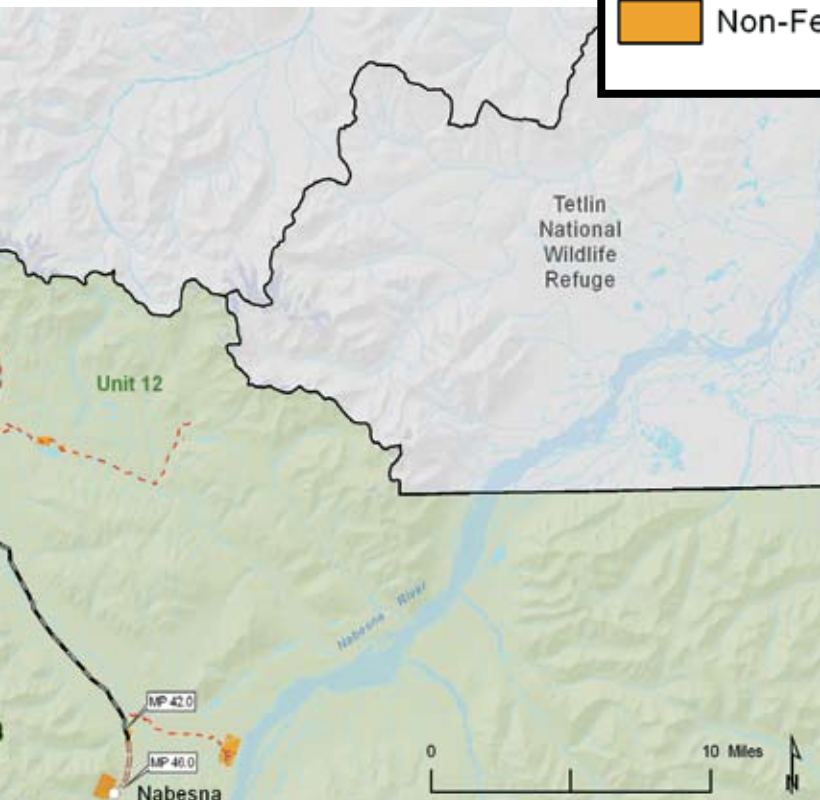


Trails



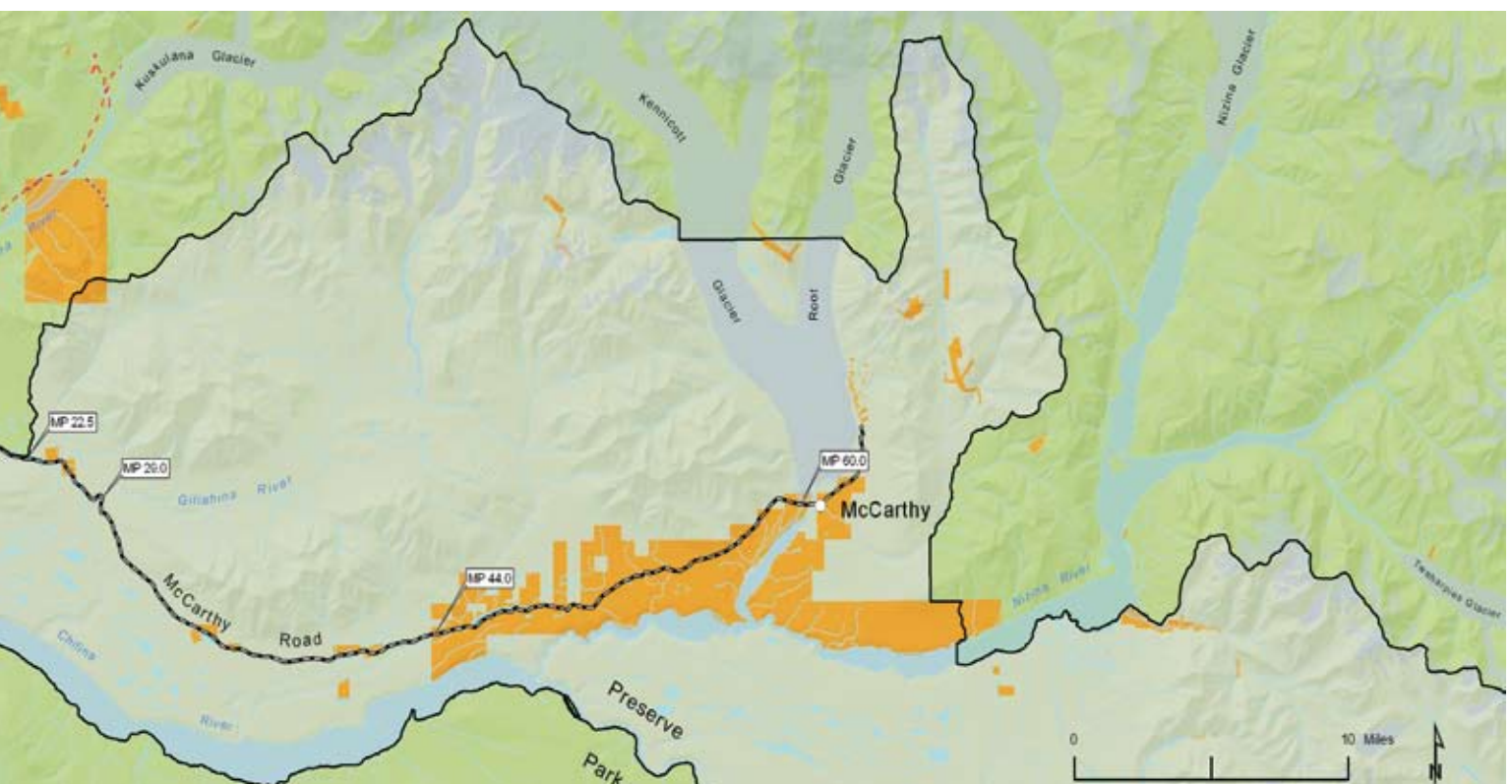
Easements\*

\* 17(b) easements cross lands belonging to Alaska Native Corporations in order to provide access to public lands and waters.



## Nabesna Road Mileposts

- Mile 0.2** Slana Ranger Station. Stop here for ORV/ATV permits, federal subsistence registration permits, trail locations, regulation booklets, maps, and road conditions. Open 7 days a week, 8 AM to 5 PM, June through September. By appointment only October through May.
- Mile 1.7** Game Management Unit 11 boundary.
- Mile 2.7** Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve boundary. The south side of the road forms the northern boundary of the Preserve for the next 1.3 miles.
- Mile 4.0** Land on both sides of the road is Preserve.
- Mile 5.0** Wrangell-St. Elias National Park boundary. The south side of the road is Park and the north side of the road is Preserve.
- Mile 25.0** Game Management Unit 12 boundary.
- Mile 28.5** Preserve is on both sides of the road.
- Mile 42.0** End of state maintenance of Nabesna Road.
- Mile 46.0** Nabesna Mine. Permission from owner is required before entering.





# Important Information to Know Before You Go

## SUBSISTENCE HARVEST OF MIGRATORY BIRDS

Eligible local rural residents may harvest waterfowl in the Park and Preserve during the fall under State of Alaska regulations. The taking of migratory birds in Alaska for subsistence during the spring and summer is regulated by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and associated regulations. Some but not all of the Park's resident zone communities are eligible to participate in this harvest. For the 2005 harvest, the eligible communities are as follows: Chistochina, Chitina, Copper Center, Dot Lake, Gakona, Gulkana, Healy Lake, Mentasta Lake, Northway, Tanacross, Tazlina, Tetlin, Tok, and Yakutat (glaucous-winged gull egg gathering only).

The spring/summer subsistence harvest is managed by the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council, which is comprised of representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and Alaska's indigenous inhabitants. The Council is separate from the Federal Subsistence Board, which makes federal regulations concerning the subsistence harvest of most other fish and wildlife in Alaska.

In addition to hunting licenses, waterfowl hunters 16 years of age or older must have a current federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp (a.k.a. Duck Stamp) and may also need an Alaska Waterfowl Conservation Stamp. (Currently, the Alaska Waterfowl Conservation Stamp is only available and valid July 1 to December



Snowmachiner near McCarthy. Photo courtesy of Devi Sharp.

31.) Contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for harvest regulations and other information about the fall harvest. For specific regulations on the spring-summer subsistence harvest, including which communities can participate in which areas, consult the Alaska Subsistence Spring/Summer Migratory Bird Harvest booklet. For additional information contact the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council at (907) 786-3499 or (877) 229-2344. Or see their web site: <http://alaska.fws.gov/ambcc/index.htm>.

## HARVEST OF TIMBER, PLANTS AND BERRIES

Non-commercial harvest of live standing timber (green logs greater than 3 inches in diameter at ground height) is allowed for appropriate subsistence uses such as house logs or firewood, when certain criteria are met. A permit is required, and applications can be obtained from and submitted to park headquarters in Copper Center. The harvest of dead or downed wood for firewood is allowed without a permit. No commercial use of green logs or firewood harvested or collected in the Park and Preserve is allowed. Also, live timber less than 3 inches in diameter may be harvested by federally qualified subsistence users without a permit.

No permit is required for the non-commercial harvest of berries, mushrooms, and other plant materials by federally qualified subsistence users.



ATV trail traversing wetlands. NPS Photo.



# Methods of Access



Airplane at Baultoff. NPS Photo.

## WHAT METHODS OF ACCESS ARE ALLOWED?

### Off-Road Vehicles

Any permanent resident of a resident zone community, resident of the Park, or holder of a 13.44 permit may use an off-road vehicle (ORV), including an all-terrain vehicle (ATV), for subsistence access within the Park and Preserve providing resource damage does not occur. A permit is not required, but is recommended. To minimize resource damage, it is recommended that ORV users travel on established trails and dry river beds.

Recreational visitors including sport hunters may only use ORVs on established trails, must travel outside of designated Wilderness and must obtain an ORV/ATV permit. Trail maps and permits are available at the Slana Ranger Station and the Visitor Center in Copper Center.

### Airplanes

Airplanes may not be used for access to the National Park for subsistence purposes but may be utilized in the National Preserve. In addition to not landing in the Park, subsistence users may not land outside the Park in order to walk into or otherwise enter the Park for subsistence activities. Residents of Yakutat may request a permit under an exception in ANILCA to access the Malaspina Forelands using aircraft for subsistence purposes. Contact the Yakutat Ranger Station for information.

## Snowmachines, Motorboats and Other Means of Surface Transportation.

Snowmachines and motorboats may be used for any purpose, including subsistence, in both the Park and Preserve. Snowmachines may only be used when there is sufficient snow cover (at least 6 to 12 inches of snow). Airboats must meet noise-level restrictions. Other means of surface transportation that have been traditionally employed, such as dog teams, may also be used.

## PLEASE BE AWARE OF AND RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY

Approximately 1 million of the 13 million acres of land within the boundaries of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve are non-federal lands belonging to Native Corporations, other private owners, and the State of Alaska. Significant amounts of these non-federal lands are located along the McCarthy Road and along the east bank of the Copper River (see maps on pages 6 and 7). Federal subsistence harvest regulations do not apply on state and private lands, which fall under the jurisdiction of state regulations.

Subsistence users are responsible for being aware of and respecting the ownership status of lands where they are engaged in subsistence activities. Crossing private lands, other than legally reserved public access easements, without the permission of the landowner, as well as camping or hunting on such lands without permission is trespassing.

Contact the park or the landowner for further information about land status within the Park and Preserve boundaries. For information about Native Corporation lands, contact the Lands Department at Ahtna, Inc. at (907) 822-3476 and the Chitina Native Corporation at (907) 823-2223.

# Where Do Federal Subsistence Regulations Come From?

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SUBSISTENCE RESOURCE COMMISSION?

The Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) provides a venue for local subsistence users to have input into the management of subsistence resources in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. The purpose of the Commission is to recommend to the Governor of Alaska and the Secretary of the Interior a program for subsistence hunting within Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. Since the establishment of the federal subsistence management program in 1990, the SRC has also been making recommendations on proposals for hunting and fishing regulations (e.g., harvest limits, seasons, and customary and traditional use determinations) affecting Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve directly to the federal subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) and the Federal Subsistence Board.

The Commission is comprised of nine local rural residents representing geographic, cultural, and user diversity from within the region. SRC members are appointed by the governor (3 members), the Secretary of the Interior (3 members), and the federal subsistence RACs (one each from the Southcentral, Eastern Interior and Southeast RACs). For a list of the current members see the Park's web site at [www.nps.gov/wrst/](http://www.nps.gov/wrst/).

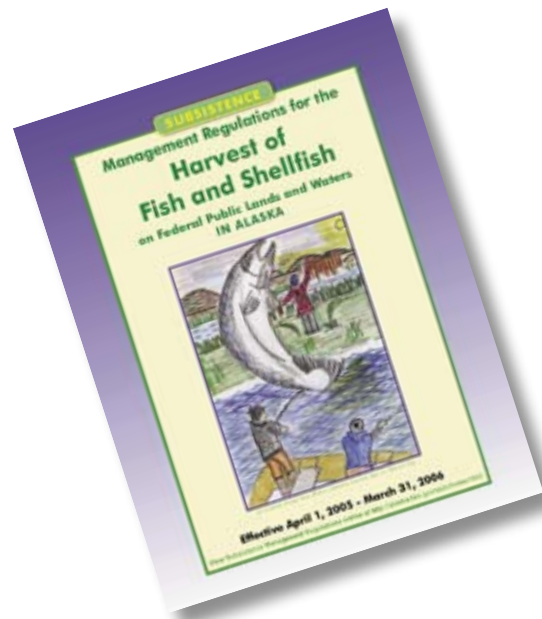
The SRC generally meets twice a year in September/October and February. Meetings are open to the public, and public comments are welcome.



Wrangell-St. Elias SRC meets in Chistochina. NPS Photo.

## HOW CHANGES ARE MADE TO FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGULATIONS

Regulations regarding the subsistence harvest of fish and wildlife on federal public lands and waters in Alaska are made by the Federal Subsistence Board. The Board consists of the Alaska directors or their designees from the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service. The Board's Chair is a representative of the Secretary of the Interior.



Federal subsistence regulations are subject to change every year. Subsistence users and others may submit proposals to change regulations as well as comment on proposals submitted by others. The Board relies heavily on input from local subsistence users when considering regulatory changes. The ten federal subsistence Regional Advisory Councils and the seven Subsistence Resource Commissions make recommendations to the Board on subsistence issues and regulatory changes.

For additional information contact the Office of Subsistence Management at (800) 478-1456 or (907) 786-3888. Or see their web site at <http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/home.html>.



# Contacts and Further Information

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

More information, including federal hunting and fishing permits, and federal subsistence regulation booklets, can be obtained from Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve offices:

### **Park Headquarters and Visitor Center**

P.O. Box 439 / Mile 106.8 Richardson Highway  
Copper Center, AK 99573  
Phone: (907) 822-5234  
Fax: (907) 822-7216

### **Slana Ranger Station**

P.O. Box 885 / Mile 0.2 Nabesna Road  
Slana, AK 99586  
Phone: (907) 822-5238  
Fax: (907) 822-5248

### **Yakutat Ranger Station**

P.O. Box 137  
Yakutat, AK 99689  
Phone: (907) 784-3295

During the summer, hunting permits are also available from the Kennecott District Ranger.

## USEFUL INFORMATION THAT MAY BE OBTAINED AT PARK OFFICES

### **Federal Subsistence Management Regulation**

**Booklets:** These booklets list the seasons, harvest limits, and customary and traditional use determinations for each game management unit and fishery management area in the state. Permit and tag requirements are listed in the booklets as well as any special restrictions or information relating to specific harvests. These booklets are updated each year. They are available at the Visitor Center in Copper Center, at the Slana Ranger Station, and on the web at <http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/home.html>.

**National Park Service Regulations:** The National Park Service regulations that apply to Alaska parks are contained in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 13. These regulations were first established in 1981 and change infrequently.

### **Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Plan:**

The plan describes subsistence issues in the Park that the NPS and Subsistence Resource Commission are addressing. It is updated once a year. The plan may be viewed at park headquarters in Copper Center.



Park resident and federally qualified subsistence user Fred Denner harvests fresh produce from his garden. NPS Photo.

# Subsistence User's Guide

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve  
P.O. Box 439  
Copper Center, Alaska 99573-0439



Phone: 907-822-5234  
Fax: 907-822-7216  
Web: [www.nps.gov/wrst](http://www.nps.gov/wrst)



Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve